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ABSTRACT

Daily newspapers may be used to broaden and enrich the curriculum in both elementary and secondary schools in a variety of ways. The newspaper can be useful in strengthening skills in the language arts and in the social studies and contains information relevant to students of all ages and levels of ability. The variety of topics a newspaper covers makes it possible to individualize learning assignments. Activities for elementary students include developing language arts, social studies, art activities, music, health, science, and mathematics. Secondary level students can benefit from practical application of information obtained from the newspaper as well as from learning possibilities offered by the coverage of current topics in the world, historical perspectives, and world problems. (JD)

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FASTBACK

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Teaching with Newspapers: The Living Curriculum

Lynn Rhoades and George Rhoades

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Series Editor, Derek L. Burleson

Teaching with Newspapers: The Living Curriculum

By Lynn Rhoades and George Rhoades

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The Newspaper and Education

That great humorist, Will Rogers, used to tell his audiences, "All I know is what I read in the newspapers."

Will Rogers would be surprised today to see just how much one can learn from the newspaper. The modern newspaper carries a vast array of news and information from around the world. It is packed with features and columns, opinion and think pieces, photographs and artwork, and stories of interest to all types of readers.

The newspaper is one of the most readily available and highly motivating resources for teaching at all levels. More than 3,000,000 youngsters and 90,000 teachers in 16,000 schools are using the newspaper as an instructional tool in almost every area of the curriculum. And the numbers are growing every year.

There are some classrooms where the newspaper is the basic text. More often, however, it is used as a supplementary resource. In the inner city, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas teachers are reporting enthusiastically how the newspaper can be an effective learning tool in reading, science, social studies, mathematics, and many other curricular areas.

There remain, however, literally thousands of teachers who are not aware of the potential the newspaper has for the curriculum. It is for these teachers that this fastback has been written. It contains hundreds

of specific activities using the resources of the newspaper. They can be used at both the elementary and secondary school levels.

For those teachers who are already making some use of the newspaper in their classrooms, hopefully, there will be some new activities here that they will want to try. For those teachers who are looking for new ideas and activities to enrich the learning experiences of children and youth, we invite them to peruse the sections that follow to learn how the newspaper can become an indispensable tool of instruction.

Rationale for Newspapers in the Classroom

The newspaper deals with what is happening in the world outside the classroom. It provides information students can use in their daily lives. For example, it tells students where to find jobs and where to buy a used car. It gives them tips on cooking and fashions; it tells them about sports and recreation opportunities.

The newspaper has something to contribute to almost all areas of the curriculum. It contains information relevant to students of all ages and ability levels. It is especially useful in strengthening skills in the language arts and the social studies. The variety of topics a newspaper covers makes it possible to individualize learning assignments.

Being familiar with the news enables students to engage in adult conversations, thereby opening up communication between them and their parents. The newspaper is frequently the only reading material that parents discuss with their children.

The appeal of a newspaper can motivate many students to read who do not respond to traditional instructional materials. It gets them started reading about subjects in which they are interested. Even so-called nonreaders sometimes turn out to be readers when they find material that interests them.

It is important that students understand the vital role the free press plays in our democratic society. Since informed participation is essential to the survival of a free society, the school should help students become intelligent readers of newspapers by teaching them how to interpret newspaper content critically.

Newspapers are a readily accessible and economical resource for teaching. Some publishers provide free copies to schools; others offer copies at special rates.

Textbooks can be as dated as yesterday. The information is often two years old by the time textbooks are published. And once adopted by a school system, they are used for a period of years, thus becoming even more outdated. For many areas of the curriculum teachers need more up-to-date materials. The newspaper which is written anew each day, offers a living curriculum. It only remains to be used. Let us show you how.

How to Begin

Arrange for newspapers to be delivered to your school each morning. Have a newspaper for each child if possible, so that students can clip items from the paper and can take their own copies home.

If your local newspaper publisher does not furnish free copies or your school budget does not permit you to purchase one for each student, try to get enough for half the students and let them work in pairs. Or, get enough papers for your largest class and use these throughout the day. Another possibility when there are budget restrictions is to order the newspaper for a shorter period than for the entire year.

And if your school budget will not allow the purchase of *any* newspapers for your students, you still can do many of the activities described in this fastback by clipping items from one copy of the newspaper. Then reproduce for your students such items as news stories, editorials, editorial cartoons, letters to the editor, weather maps, TV schedules, comic strips, classified ads, etc.

Each student will need a notebook in which to paste newspaper clippings and possibly another notebook or a folder in which to maintain a file on an individual topic. Articles clipped can be used for oral and written reports.

"Find and list" may be substituted for any of the "clip and paste" directions in the following activity suggestions.

For purposes of this fastback, activities are divided into elementary and secondary levels. There is, of course, some overlap, and many of the activities can be adjusted to the ability level of particular students.

The Newspaper in the Elementary Curriculum

Newspapers are ideal for such activities as coloring, underlining, clipping, pasting, and storytelling—all of which may contribute to learning skills of reading, thinking, oral communication, writing, and manual dexterity.

Some youngsters can work with the whole newspaper, some with just one section, some with just one page. Younger children will be able to handle the paper better if you staple the edge of each section to keep it from falling apart.

In this fastback the activities designed for the elementary child have been arranged by subject matter and by level of difficulty. Thus, in the language arts section we begin with pictures, which the child can work with prior to being able to read or write. We progress to letters of the alphabet. Next we work with words or word games in preparation for writing sentences and paragraphs. Grammar activities follow, and finally there are activities on writing headlines and news stories. The teacher can, of course, move at will among these activities, using those for which the students are ready.

Language Arts

Students will need a notebook in which to do their newspaper activities. The words "Newspaper Notebook" can be printed on the front, or these letters can be clipped from the newspaper and pasted on

the cover. Students can add drawings or pictures to make an attractive cover.

Picture Activities

1. Choose a picture or cartoon from the newspaper to color and explain to the class. Make up a story about a picture.

2. Clip pictures to make individual or class notebooks on particular topics such as animals, birds, flowers, sports, occupations, or famous persons.

3. Find pictures (or words) that are happy, sad, or show action. Paste these on a page with an appropriate heading at the top.

4. Clip and paste pictures of things (or words) that rhyme. Another page can have pictures of things that begin with certain sounds or end with them.

5. Label different colored sheets of construction paper (or pages in the notebook) with the headings *Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Bedroom, Yard.* Clip pictures of household objects and paste them on the correct chart. Other categories for picture charts are *Toys for Babies, Toys for Young Children,* and *Toys for Older Children.*

6. Change the classroom bulletin board each day, using pictures and articles from the newspaper.

Alphabet Activities

1. Label sheets of paper *A, B, C,* etc. Find pictures of objects that start with these letters and paste them on the right page.

2. On a page in your notebook, paste one word that starts with each letter of the alphabet. The first one through is the winner.

3. Find the names of fruits and vegetables in a grocery ad and paste them in alphabetical order.

4. Alphabetize the names of comic strips.

Working with Words Activities

1. Find the compound words in a news story. Draw a line between the two parts of the words. Examples: story/book, foot/ball, dog/house. (Students can work in pairs for this activity.)

2. Take a paragraph or two of a news story and see how many little words you can find in the big words. Example: In the word *gathering,* you find these words: gather, at, the, her, ring, in.

3. Find words that illustrate phonic rules that the class is working

on. Examples: words that have long and short vowels in them, words that end in silent *e*, and words that end in *ed*, *t*, or *d*. Also find words with *st* sounds or other consonant blends with which children are having difficulty.

4. Find words to which you could add *er* and *est*.

5. Make charts labeled *Seeing*, *Hearing*, *Smelling*, *Tasting*, and *Feeling*. Find words in the newspaper that pertain to these senses and write them on the correct chart.

6. Draw a line down the middle of a sheet of paper. Label the left column *Prefixes* and the right column *Suffixes*. Find words with prefixes and suffixes from the newspaper and write them in the correct column.

7. Find as many abbreviations as you can on a page of the newspaper. Write what the letters stand for.

8. *Name Game*. Take the letters of your first name. Find words in the paper that begin with these letters and describe you. Clip these words and paste them on a chart. If you wish, draw a self-portrait on the chart. A variation of this activity is a *What I'd Like to Be* chart. Look for words starting with the letters of your name that describe what you would like to be.

9. *Get in the Picture*. Clip and paste a picture from the newspaper. Complete these sentences: If I were in this picture, I could see . . ., I could hear . . ., I could smell . . ., I could taste . . ., I could touch. . . .

10. *TV Quiz*. Students work together in pairs. Pick out a TV personality. Find at least five words or phrases on the front page that could describe the person or what he or she does. Let the class guess who the person is. Example: large, temper, frightening, can't talk, torn shirt. Answer: The Incredible Hulk.

11. *Making Movies*. Use synonyms to make new titles for movie ads in the entertainment section. Examples: *Fantastic Voyage* (Incredible Trip); *Heaven Can Wait* (Paradise Delayed); *The Cheap Detective* (Inexpensive Private Eye). Students can work in pairs.

12. *Watching TV*. Have small groups use the TV schedule in the newspaper to plan the best programs to watch from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on a given day. Let one person from each group defend the choices.

13. *Paste-Up Poetry*. Find words in headlines and ads that seem to

jump out at you because of the size of type or style of type or because they have special meaning for you. Paste them on a sheet of paper in a way that is meaningful and attractive. Students can then read their paste-up poems to the class and interpret them.

Writing Activities

1. Find 10 words in the newspaper that you do not know. List each one, copy the definition from the dictionary, and write a sentence using the new word.

2. List 10 names from the front page of the newspaper. Identify each person and write one to three sentences telling why he or she is in the news.

3. Clip pictures and stories about accidents and write tips on safety.

4. Clip and paste a picture of a food, and see if you can make up the recipe for this food. Write your recipe beside the picture.

5. Select a pet from the classified ads. Write a paragraph telling why you chose this particular pet.

6. Find a picture in the newspaper with two or more people in it. Write a short description of these people.

7. Write a letter ordering something from a picture ad or a classified ad.

8. *Hall of Fame* and *Hall of Shame*. Clip newspaper articles that would make people proud to be in the story or that would make them ashamed to be in the story. Write a paragraph telling why people would feel this way.

9. Write personal letters to people in the news—entertainers, politicians, sports figures, and others.

10. Write a letter to an out-of-state child who is moving to your city. Tell your friend about the town, using only information you find in the newspaper.

11. *Comic Strips*. a) Discuss favorite comic strips and decide which ones come closest to representing real-life situations. b) After seeing three frames of a comic strip, write what would happen in the fourth frame. The teacher can then show what happened in the original strip. c) Remove the dialogue in the balloons in a comic strip. Write new dialogue. d) Individually or in groups, invent, write, and illustrate your own comic strip.

Grammar Activities

1. In a given newspaper article, underline various parts of speech in different colors.

2. Rewrite a news story, substituting synonyms for each noun.

3. *Whodunit?* Underline the words *he, she, it,* and *they* in a news story. Draw an arrow back to the word to which each pronoun refers.

4. Rewrite an advertisement by changing all the adjectives.

5. *Verb Contest.* See who can find the most verbs in a news story. Do the same with other parts of speech.

6. Paste present-tense verbs from a newspaper article in your notebook. Write the verb in the past tense or write a sentence using the past tense of the verb.

News Story Activities

1. Write new headlines for news stories.

2. Clip and paste in your notebook three news stories. Beside each story identify the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the story.

3. Clip and paste a news story. Beside each paragraph tell the main idea of that paragraph in a sentence of five words or fewer.

4. Clip and paste a news article. Alongside, write the article in your own words.

5. The teacher reads a news article while the students listen. Students then write down everything they remember. The object is to see if they can identify the five Ws and H (who, what, when, where, why, and how) of news story writing. Some students can read their lists to the class, and the rest of the class can challenge answers. This is a listening exercise that can be repeated periodically.

6. Have students participate in class discussions or panel discussions on topics in the news. A news story could be written about that discussion.

7. Assign each student to read a news story and write some questions on it. See if the class can answer these questions after reading the stories.

8. Assign older students to select an appropriate story and then rewrite it in simple words and short sentences so that a first-grader can read it.

9. Individually or in groups, write a radio newscast based on today's newspaper stories.

10. *Goofsville Gazette*. Have groups of students make up a front page with many kinds of errors. The groups can then exchange pages with each other to see if they can find the mistakes.

Elementary Social Studies

Geography

1. See who can find the most geographical terms (river, mountain, desert, lake, etc.) on the front page of the newspaper. Write these terms in your notebook.

2. Who can find the most countries and the most capital cities mentioned in the day's news? Locate these cities and countries on the map or globe. Tell why each is in the news.

3. Find articles about crops grown in your area.

4. Clip pictures and stories about whatever country or area the class is studying. Use these stories for oral and written reports.

5. *Be the Expert*. Pick a country and make a notebook about it. For each article you clip, write a one-paragraph summary. At the end of each week, write a brief summary of the week's news in your area. Report periodically to the class.

People and Events

1. Before class the teacher lists 10 or more questions covering news throughout the paper. Put these on the blackboard or overhead projector and let students locate the answers. (Some newspapers publish such a quiz in each issue.)

2. *Who's Who?* Ask students to pick the name of a prominent person in the news and give the class some clues about the person—what country he or she comes from, why he or she is in the news. The class then tries to find the name of the person.

3. *Meet the Press*. Have mock interviews with people in the news. Some students can role play the important people and the other students role play reporters asking them questions.

4. Make a scrapbook on a subject such as Our City, Our State, The President, Political Leaders, Famous Persons, A Foreign Country, or A

Current Event. Clip articles on the subject for several weeks, then make an oral report to the class that summarizes the topic. Students may also prepare a written report.

5. *The Top Ten.* Keep a file of important newspaper stories. Ask the class to pick the top story of the week, then the top story of the month. Decide which, if any, of these stories might be mentioned in history books 25 years from now and 100 years from now.

6. Clip and save headlines for a week. On Friday give one to each student with instructions to write a news story based on that headline.

7. Assign students to follow certain candidates for public office and to give periodic reports on their candidate's progress.

8. Make a radio news broadcast. These can be regularly scheduled news programs in which each student is assigned a responsibility for a particular topic. The programs can be broadcast on the school P.A. system. If your school has videotape equipment, a TV news program can be recorded and shown at a later time.

Elementary Art Activities

1. Make newspaper picture notebooks on a subject of the students' choice. Particularly good news photos may also be used for bulletin boards or "art exhibits." Let each child pick a favorite picture, mount it attractively, and then display it on the wall of the room.

2. Select a large ad and tell why people might take notice of it. What would they like or not like? Older children can design ads.

3. Clip a recipe and paste it in your notebook. Draw a picture to show what the prepared food would look like.

4. Choose a human interest news story and draw a picture to illustrate it.

5. Draw frames of your favorite comic strip in the style of the original artist.

6. Older students might design editorial cartoons based on a news event or personality.

Elementary Music

1. Use newspaper clippings to make bulletin boards or notebooks of musical instruments, musicians, recordings, concerts, different types of music, etc.

2. Select appropriate background music for use with oral reports or news broadcasts.

3. Write an original song based on a story in the news and then perform it for the class.

Elementary Health

1. Make a bulletin board on good posture using newspaper photos of people with good and poor posture.

2. Make a sports bulletin board with news photos of sports activities. Have students write a one-paragraph description of the sport and post it under the photo.

3. Make a bulletin board on nutritious foods using the articles and pictures that you find in the newspaper.

4. Plan nutritious menus based on the food section features of the week.

5. Clip and file articles for health and safety bulletin boards and notebooks or for oral and written reports. Possible subjects include good health practices, medicine, first aid tips, water safety, fire and accident prevention, exercise, bicycle and automobile safety, smoking, alcohol, drugs, pollution, and mental health.

Elementary Science

1. Keep a list of vocabulary words found in newspaper science stories. Write the definition you find in the dictionary.

2. Make a bulletin board of famous people in science.

3. Clip and paste articles in a notebook about an outstanding scientist in the news, new inventions, a specific disease, surgical techniques, weather control, pollution, explorations in outer space, etc. Write brief summaries of the articles and report to the class.

4. Study newspaper weather maps and weather stories. Make predictions about weather for the next day and the next week.

Elementary Mathematics

1. Count the number of people or objects in a picture.

2. Label sheets of paper 1 through 10. Paste a newspaper picture of one object on page 1, pictures of two objects on page 2, pictures of three objects on page 3, etc.

3. Circle in one color all the even numbers in a newspaper article or advertisement. Circle odd numbers in another color.

4. See who can find the largest number on a newspaper page in one minute.

5. Select a complete outfit to wear from the ads in the newspaper. Clip and paste pictures of your outfit and list the cost of each item. What is the total cost of the outfit?

6. Select the most expensive outfit to wear from today's newspaper ads. Clip and paste these items and prices, and tell the class how much you would have to pay.

7. You have $50 to spend in 30 minutes. Clip and paste on a paper the pictures and prices of the things you would buy. How much change do you have left?

8. Select five to 10 items from the newspaper that you would like to own. Figure the cost. Older students can add the state sales tax.

9. From a newspaper grocery store ad, the teacher lists 10 items on the blackboard. Have students clip and paste the pictures and prices of these items and figure the total grocery bill.

10. From newspaper ads find new furniture you would like to have for your room at home. Clip and paste the pictures and total the cost.

11. Clip pictures and prices of 10 items on sale in a store's "sale" ad. Figure the difference between the regular price and the sale price. Older students can determine the percent of savings.

12. Give students the price per word and per day for classified ads. Figure the cost of running various ads for one day, three days, or a week.

13. Figure the average daily temperature for the week.

14. Find a job in the classified ad section that names a salary. Figure the amount paid by the hour, day, week, month, and year.

15. Paste a recipe from the newspaper on one side of a page in your notebook. Beside it, rewrite the recipe, using one-fourth or one-half of the ingredients.

16. Clip and paste food ads that give the price per pound. Figure the price for three, four, and five pounds. More advanced students can determine the price of 1 1/3, 3 1/2, or 4 3/4 pounds.

17. The teacher suggests an amount of money as down payment on a car or house advertised in the newspaper. Figure the balance due and

the amount required for monthly payments over a period of three or four years for a car or 30 years for a house.

18. Take figures and statistics given in a newspaper article (perhaps in a sports story), and make a line, bar, or pie graph to illustrate them.

19. Use an imaginary $1,000 to buy stock in one or more companies. Follow the stock reports daily for gains and losses. Figure percentages of profit and loss. Construct a graph to show these.

20. Practice changing all types of measurements in news stories to metric equivalents.

The Newspaper in the Secondary Curriculum

The daily newspaper is a rich resource for many areas of the secondary curriculum. Using the newspaper in the classroom puts students in touch with topics of adult conversation and raises issues about adult problems they will soon be facing. Speaking and writing assignments based on news stories take on new importance since they require understanding of and communicating about significant ideas from the adult world, and math takes on a new relevance for the student figuring out how to support a household.

Most secondary students are becoming increasingly concerned with their futures and want the "real" information the newspaper provides about college, careers, available jobs, housing, and automobiles. They are beginning to think about homes and families of their own and want information on family life, child care, food preparation, nutrition, budgets, health, and safety.

Adolescents are beginning to wonder what kind of world they will live in for the rest of their lives. What scientific findings will affect their daily patterns of life? They are concerned with their future responsibility as citizens. They wonder if they will be able to understand what is happening in government and in foreign relations. They wonder if they will understand the political issues in order to vote intelligently.

As they gradually move into the adult world, these students are, at the same time, concerned with the typical problems and interests of

adolescence: appearance, making friends, dating, wearing the latest fashions, doing whatever is "in," and being able to discuss the latest hit records, movies, and sports events with their friends.

The newspaper can provide a living curriculum that serves all of these special needs and interests of youth.

Secondary English

General Activities

1. Find words in the newspaper that the students' great grandparents would not know, such as *waterbed, microwave, steel-belted radials,* etc.

2. Analyze the TV schedule from the newspaper. Categorize programs under various headings: news, documentaries, family, police/detective, westerns, comedies, children's programs, war, sports, talk shows, soap operas, movies, etc. (Some programs may be listed in more than one category.) Decide which categories receive the most TV time.

3. Prepare a report giving prices and descriptions of this year's automobiles based on information you find in the newspaper.

4. Write a short story about a news article. Do not change the facts in the story, but you may add descriptions of characters and setting and dialogue.

5. Collect articles and ads from the newspaper about a particular occupation. Write a short paper about the education and training required, salary, and advantages and disadvantages of the job. Report to the class.

6. List the 10 values you consider most important. Clip stories from the newspaper for one week that illustrate these values. The class can then compare lists to see how values are reflected in human events.

7. Identify one or more ethnic groups. Find articles and ads in the newspaper showing contributions those groups have made to American culture—foods, clothing, music, language. Write a report on these contributions.

8. Write a book review or movie review for the newspaper.

9. What clues would the entertainment section of the newspaper give to someone from another planet who did not know anything about earth people? Justify your answers using the newspaper.

Advertising Activities

1. Write a classified ad for something that would be difficult to sell, such as a piano with no black keys, a book without a cover, or a pair of blue jeans with three legs.

2. Write a classified ad for your million-dollar dream home.

3. Write a letter applying for a job listed in the paper. Role play the interview for the job, with another student serving as the personnel manager.

4. Clip and paste in your newspaper notebook at least one ad based on each of these basic appeals: adventure, ambition, appearance, economy, health, luxury, safety, sex, and vanity.

5. Study newspaper advertisements to find examples of exaggerations, misleading statements, or unsupported claims. Look for these propaganda techniques:

a. *Band wagon.* Everybody's in favor of it; join the crowd.

b. *Plain folks.* The users of this product are simple, down-to-earth people like you and me.

c. *Card stacking.* Distorting or omitting facts, telling half-truths.

d. *Name-calling.* Stereotyping ideas or people with a bad label.

e. *Glittering generalities.* Using "good" labels, such as democratic, patriotic, amazing, beautiful, and exciting, that are unsupported by facts.

f. *Testimonial.* Seeking support for an idea or product by having it endorsed by a famous person, such as a sports figure or movie or TV star.

g. *Snob appeal.* Only the richest, most important, or most discerning people like this idea or product.

h. *Transfer.* Associating a respected person or idea with whatever is being promoted, such as picturing a well-known athlete in a breakfast cereal advertisement.

6. Clip and paste in your newspaper notebook examples of ads directed to persons of various ages, income levels, and ethnic groups. Explain your choices by referring to price, language, type of appeal, and propaganda techniques.

7. Select what you consider to be effective and ineffective ads and compare them with regard to size, visual appeal, language, good taste, and persuasiveness. Rewrite objectionable or ineffective ads.

8. As a group assignment, write an advertising code for acceptable and unacceptable advertising.

9. Individuals or small groups invent a product and plan an advertising campaign for that product, writing and designing ads for newspaper, radio, television, and billboard. Share ads with the class. Then vote on who invented the best product and who created the best advertising campaign.

News Story Activities

1. Clip and paste in your newspaper notebook three articles each day and list the who, what, when, where, why, and how for each article. Articles should be taken from different sections of the newspaper.

2. Pick three interesting pictures from the day's newspaper. Relate them in some way and write a story or a tall tale. Show your three pictures to the class and read your story or tall tale.

3. Write headlines for historic events. See if the class can guess the event from your headline.

4. Find five examples of interesting headlines. Find five examples of misleading headlines.

5. Select one story from each of the following sections of the newspaper: general news, business, entertainment, sports, and family or women's news. Write the main idea of each story in one sentence. Explain how the story pertains to you.

6. Write new headlines for all the stories on the front page. Write new leads for three of these stories.

7. Write your own obituary for the newspaper based on what you think the events of your future life might be.

8. Write a news story about something that is happening or has happened in one of your classes.

Feature Story Activities

1. Examine feature stories to find words that convey values or emotions.

2. Write a feature story about a classmate, a school event, or a current event.

3. Write letters to Ann Landers and exchange them with classmates. Answer the letters in the Ann Landers style.

Editorial Writing Activities

1. Compare a news story and an editorial *on the same subject.* Consider sentence structure, fact vs. opinion, and tone of the article.

2. Find examples of editorializing (bias) in news stories.

3. Collect editorials for one week or longer. Underline facts in red and opinions in blue.

4. Read an editorial and then write a response stating why it did or did not change your opinion.

5. Choose a news story and write an editorial based on it.

6. Write an editorial utilizing some of the propaganda techniques described in the Advertising section on page 23.

7. Study the editorials and columnists on the editorial page and determine whether there is a balance of opinion. List topics discussed and identify which editorials are pro and which are con.

8. Look over the stories on the front page of the newspaper. Guess which topic the editorial cartoon will be about. Turn to the editorial page to see if you are correct. Do this for one week and see if your guesswork improves.

9. Make an editorial cartoon about a story on the front page.

Interpretative News Story Activities

1. Find an in-depth news story involving different viewpoints. The story may be local or national. Explain who holds each viewpoint and possible reasons for each opinion.

2. Evalute an in-depth news story as to balance of opinion. Are all sides presented? Who else should have been interviewed for the story?

3. Find news stories that a longer, more thorough story could be written about. Expand one of the stories by interviewing other persons and getting other information and opinions.

The English teacher may find useful activities in the other subject areas that follow, since all of these activities help to develop language skills.

Secondary History-Government

1. Individual or class files can be compiled by clipping newspaper articles on subjects such as crime, pollution, unemployment, energy sources, Cabinet members, etc. These clippings can be used for oral and

written reports, panel discussions, and debates.

2. Choose a current event to follow in the newspaper over a period of four to six weeks. Write a paragraph each week summarizing the important actions connected with the current event. At the end of the project, report major happenings to the class and discuss the causes of the problem, who is right and wrong, and possible solutions.

3. Find newspaper stories that discuss the duties of citizens, such as voting, paying taxes, observing traffic laws. Find other examples of things that signify a good citizen, such as volunteer work, charitable contributions, and membership in service organizations.

4. Clip articles from the newspaper about local or city officials. Write one or two sentences explaining the job of each official.

5. Find newspaper articles that give examples of services provided by the government. Determine which of these are performed by city, county, state, or federal governments.

6. Choose the five most important problems discussed in the day's paper. Propose a solution for at least one of them.

7. For a group activity pick newspaper articles and photos to be put into a time capsule that will be opened in the year 2,980. The items selected should attempt to provide the future reader with a representative view of current times.

8. *Stump the Expert.* This game is played by the class asking one student (the "expert") questions from the day's newspaper. The student remains the expert until he or she is stumped by a question. Then the student who asked that question becomes the expert.

9. For one week clip newspaper articles that involve the President. Summarize and evaluate his actions and statements. Then choose a student to role play the President during a news conference. Other students can be the reporters who ask the questions.

10. Find newspaper articles on an issue before Congress. Decide which way you would like Congress to vote. Write an editorial or a letter to your representative or senator in support of your decision.

11. Make a list of freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Find newspaper stories relating to these freedoms. Find newspaper stories that show which of these Constitutional freedoms are lacking in foreign countries.

12. Make a newspaper notebook on world leaders. Choose the best leader and the worst, and explain your choices.

13. Clip quotations by world leaders from the newspaper for a period of several weeks. Then choose those quotations that might become famous and tell why you chose them.

14. Find all the stories that might be censored in the newspaper if this country had a dictator instead of elected officials. Which stories would be left out or censored, and why?

15. Assign students to represent a country in a classroom United Nations. Have students do research on their country from the newspaper and prepare a written report on its policies. The class (the General Assembly) can then debate a current topic and vote on resolutions presented.

Secondary Art Activities

1. Clip items from the newspaper to make attractive posters, collages, or mobiles.

2. Collect examples of different styles of newspaper type and paste these in your notebook. Practice lettering in the different styles.

3. Design a new style of type.

4. Design a trademark for a product and the packaging for the product.

5. Copy newspaper pictures of fashions, automobiles, animals, people, etc.

6. Design illustrated ads.

7. Draw original cartoons and comic strips.

Home Economics Activities

1. Find examples of newspaper ads offering a variety of services for the home. How many different services are available?

2. Write 10 "Help Wanted" ads for home and classroom chores. Attempt to make undesirable duties sound interesting and enjoyable.

3. Clip and paste pictures and articles about clothing. Report on current fashions. Predict fashions for next year.

4. Clip articles on teenage friendships. Write a brief summary and reaction to the information. Report to the class.

5. Collect examples of different types of recipes from the news-

paper. Write a brief evaluation of the ones you try. Rate them with one to four stars.

6. Clip newspaper articles on problems of raising children. Discuss solutions to problems. Use this information to write a page of tips for babysitters.

7. Give students a shopping list with instructions to find each item in a grocery ad. Have students list each item, the price, and the store at which it is available. See who can "buy" all of the items from the newspaper for the least amount of money.

8. Clip furniture ads to furnish a six-room house. Figure the cost of furniture for each room and the total cost of furnishing the house. Draw a floor plan for each room of the house. Show how you would arrange the furniture. (Alternative: The teacher may specify an amount per room and have students try to stay within the limit.)

9. Use newspaper ads to figure the cost of carpeting each room or putting linoleum or tile in each room.

10. Clip and paste articles on foods and nutrition. Alongside each one, write a summary in a few sentences.

11. Clip and paste a recipe from the newspaper that you would like to make. Using food ads, determine how much it would cost you to buy the ingredients to prepare the recipe.

12. Find a restaurant ad that contains a dinner menu including prices. Using food ads, figure the amount that you would pay if you bought the ingredients and prepared the dinner yourself.

13. Plan a nutritious weekly menu using newspaper recipes and ads. Determine the cost.

14. Make a month's budget for a married couple who have just graduated from high school and are both working. Use classified job ads to determine their probable income. Then budget for food, housing, utility bills, clothing, entertainment, miscellaneous, and savings.

For other home economics activities, see the secondary mathematics section of this fastback.

Secondary Science Activities

1. Students can keep newspaper notebooks on topics such as new drugs and antibiotics, earthquakes, tornadoes, the oceans and seas,

deserts, glaciers, rocks and minerals, fossils, erosion, soil, water, crops, forests, wildlife, etc. Add to this information with library research. Make oral and written reports to the class.

2. Using newspaper clippings, make a bulletin board on "Who's Who in Science."

3. Clip stories or ads for products that were unknown 25 years ago. Advanced students can identify scientific discoveries that led to the new products.

4. Study the weather forecasts in the newspaper for one week. Then write your own forecast for the following week based on the data in the forecasts.

5. Using your newspaper, develop a vocabulary list of technical terms on space flight.

6. Clip newspaper articles on pollution and determine causes, effects, and possible solutions.

7. Find articles on existing energy sources and possible future sources. Make an oral or written report on this information.

Secondary Mathematics Activities

1. Find as many symbols, abbreviations, numerals, and words relating to mathematics as you can find in the first five pages of the day's newspaper.

2. Give students a budget and let them do Christmas shopping for an imaginary family by clipping newspaper ads. Tell them how many people are in the family.

3. The teacher furnishes a list of 10 or 20 commodities, such as a dozen eggs, a pound of bacon, a loaf of bread, etc. Students compare prices from different store ads to see where they can get the best price on each item. The object of the activity is to see who can buy everything on the list but spend the least amount of money. It helps to set up a chart for this purpose, using the headings *Item, Price at Store No. 1, Price at Store No. 2, Price at Store No. 3,* etc. Circle the lowest price for each item on the chart. Then find the total cost of all these "bargains." Also total the vertical columns to get the total price you would pay if you bought all of the items at Store No. 1, all at Store No. 2, or all at Store No. 3. Figure the percent of savings at the store with the lowest prices.

4. Clip newspaper coupons for free items or discounts on products. Total your savings. Who can save the most?

5. Identify the most expensive and the least expensive automobiles advertised in the day's newspaper.

6. Figure the cost of transportation, housing accommodations, food, and entertainment for various vacation spots based on ads in the newspaper.

7. Figure the hours of daylight over a period of time by using the times of sunrise and sunset. Make a graph to show the daily changes.

8. Find 15 classified ads for homes for sale in a certain area of town. Clip and paste these in your newspaper notebook. Figure the average cost of a home in that area.

9. Clip and paste classified ads for 15 apartments for rent in a certain area. What is the average rent?

10. Find the average salary in a particular job category advertised in the classified section.

11. Identify a job in the want ads that lists the salary. Figure the take-home pay after the following items are taken out: 6% for social security, 20% for income tax, $15 monthly for hospitalization, and 10% for a savings plan.

12. a) Divide a page of your notebook into four sections labeled *Eighth Grade, Twelfth Grade, Junior College, College.* b) Find a classified ad showing the best-paying job you think you could get with each amount of education. Paste the four ads in the appropriate sections. c) Consider the salary you found in the four ads and find classified ads for an apartment you think you could afford to rent at the four salary levels. Paste these ads under the appropriate sections. d) Find an ad for the best car you could afford at the four salary levels. Paste these ads under the appropriate sections.

13. Pretend you have $100,000 in the stock market in at least five different stocks. Follow your daily gains and losses.

14. What percent of the daily newspaper is made up of classified ads? Sports? Comics?

15. Find the percent of marriages that end in divorce, based on weekly averages. Create graphs showing the number of marriages and divorces per day or week.

16. What percent of babies born each week are boys, according to the local newspaper?

17. Figure the cost of advertised items bought on the installment plan. Remember to include your state sales tax. How much interest will be added to the original price?

18. Compare interest rates shown in newspaper ads for banks and for savings and loan associations. Consider how often the interest is compounded. Decide where you would deposit your money to get the best return on your investment.

19. Have groups of four to six students plan a business venture. Determine what the business will be and prepare the first year's budget, using your newspaper to find costs for real estate, supplies, equipment, salaries, advertising, taxes. Estimate the yearly profit.

Newspaper in Education (NIE) Program

Much of the impetus for using newspapers in the classroom has come from the Newspaper in Education (NIE) programs sponsored by the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA). Approximately 500 newspapers in the United States and Canada participate in NIE. An estimated 30 million copies of newspapers are used in classrooms each year. Nearly two-thirds of the NIE newspaper publishers charge schools one-half of the regular newsstand price. The remainder provide the newspapers free of charge.

Many of the NIE programs offer such teaching aids as activity sheets, filmstrips, sample lesson plans, and others. Approximately 60% of the newspapers provide these materials free. Also, 75% of the newspapers offer teacher workshops ranging from a half day to one or more weeks. These are often conducted in cooperation with a local college or university.

Recommended Resources

Bibliography: Newspaper in Education Publications.

A guide to more than 100 carefully selected, practical teacher guides and curriculum materials to aid the classroom use of newspapers. Source: Single copies free from ANPA Foundation, P.O. Box 17407, Dulles International Airport, Washington, DC 20041.

Lindner, Joy. *Newspaper Learning Package* (1971).

Contains activity sheets allowing students to work independently with the newspaper. Well-organized. Aimed at skill development. Grades 4 through 12. 30 pages. Price $1. Source: The Wenatchee World, P.O. Box 1511, Wenatchee, WA 98801, Attn. Circulation Director.

Mattia, Christine. *Newspapers: A Lifeskills Tool* (1979).

Designed to introduce children to survival and competency skills. Good variety of activities using the newspaper. Contains worksheets, including a job application form. Grades 4 through 9. 16 pages. Single copy free. Source: Post Publishing Co., 410 State Street, Bridgeport, CT 06602, Attn. Educational Services NIE Coordinator.

Newspaper in the Classroom Teacher's Manual (1979).

Activities related to sensitivity, creativity, life skills, and critical thinking. Includes lesson plans. Grades 4 through 12. 64 pages. Single copy free. Source: Post-Courier Newspapers, Post-Courier Bldg., Suite 100, 6296 Rivers Ave., North Charleston, SC 29405, Attn. Director, Educational Services.

Piercey, Dorothy, ed. *So You Want to Put Out a Class Newspaper* (1976).

Covers organization of the newspaper, various types of classroom newspapers, and instructions for assembling a staff and assigning duties. Grades K through 12. 17 pages. Price $.50. Source: The Arizona Republic/The Phoenix Gazette, P.O. Box 1950, Phoenix, AZ 85001, Attn. Educational Services Coordinator.

Read All About It: A Student Guide to the Newspaper (Revised, 1978).

Organization of the newspaper, how it is created from start to finish, and the role of the press. Grades 7 through 12. 24 pages. Single copy free. Source:

Indianapolis Star and News, P.O. Box 145, Indianapolis, IN 46206, Attn. NIE Coordinator.

Slater, Colleen. *Math Activities* (1978).

Interesting activities to teach math concepts, consumer math, metrics graphs, fractions, ratios, decimals, and geometry. Grades K through 12. 20 pages. Price $1. Source: Tucson Newspapers Inc., 4850 Park Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85726, Attn. NIE Coordinator.

Strobo, Daniel F. *Newspapers Make Math Meaningful* (1976).

Newspaper activities are matched to specific objectives in teaching math. Includes chapters on algebra, geometry, and consumer education. Grades 7 through 12. 28 pages. Price $.50. Source: St. Louis Post Dispatch/St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 900 North 12th Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63101, Attn. NIE Coordinator.

Ware, Inez Marie. *Publishing a Newspaper in Elementary Schools* (1974).

Simple instructions on how students can publish their own newspaper. Grades 4 through 9. 16 pages. Single copy free. Source: Buffalo Courier Express, 787 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14240, Attn. NIE Coordinator.

Wilson, Robert M., and Barnes, Marcia M. *Using Newspapers to Teach Reading Skills* (1975).

Especially for educators planning a reading curriculum. Assesses how newspapers can be used to teach 43 reading skills at the primary, intermediate, and secondary levels. 52 pages. Price $1. Source: ANPA Foundation, Box 17407, Dulles International Airport, Washington, DC 20041, Attn. Educational Services Dept.

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